

ART. XXII.—*Manual of the Principles and Practice of Operative Surgery.* By STEPHEN SMITH, A.M., M.D., Surgeon to Bellevue and St. Vincent Hospitals, New York. 12mo. pp. 690. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co., 1879.

OF the various "Manuals" and "Handbooks" published during the years of our late war, no one was received with more favour than the "Handbook of Surgical Operations," by Dr. Stephen Smith, of New York, out of which work has been developed the "Manual" now under review. In it the author has treated of the general operations of surgery; constantly having in mind, as he says, Malgaigne's suggestions as to the giving of indications and surgical anatomy as well as operative procedures.

Beginning with most useful hints as to what is demanded of the surgeon both as respects himself and his treatment of patients, the proper method of determining what is the nature of the particular case before him, the probable result of such, and what should be done for it; the author passes on to the consideration of the circumstances under which an operation should be made; the general methods of operating, of arresting hemorrhage, and of dressing the wound at the time and subsequently; the methods of repair, and the accidents that may occur during the process of healing; and then takes up in order the surgery of the bones and joints, of the muscular, circulatory, nervous, and tegumentary systems, and of the digestive, respiratory, urinary, and generative organs, and of the extremities—all in the space of 650 pages.

As a general criticism, it may be said that too much has been attempted; and that many things have been noticed that hardly come within the just province of operative surgery. Much, for example, that has been written on the nervous and tegumentary systems, excellent as it is, belongs rather to general surgery than to its subsection, operative surgery, and the same might be said of the chapter on the liver; and all through that portion of the book devoted to regional surgery are paragraphs upon the nature and symptoms of diseases that however well "adapted to present all necessary facts in the most available form for the practitioner," can hardly be regarded as discussions of the indications for operations.

One ought not, though, to complain because more good things are given him than he had a right to expect; and we pass to the notice of some of the special points that have attracted our attention. Each of the three ordinary anæsthetic agents, nitrous oxide, ether, and chloroform, are recommended to be used in appropriate cases; the danger of the latter being duly pointed out, and caution given against its administration to patients having organic disease of the heart. The fact is, though, that in the majority of cases of sudden chloroform-death the heart has been found healthy, and it cannot be told beforehand whether or not the anæsthetic may be taken with safety. Is not a surgeon then under such circumstances blamable for not giving the safer agent?

The antiseptic dressing is most favourably regarded, and constant reference to its use is made throughout the book. For example, in writing of compound fractures the author says: "These injuries have always been regarded as dangerous, because such wounds commonly inflame and suppurate, but when they are protected from the action of septic ferments recovery will occur with slight inflammation and suppuration;" and again,

"Treated in this manner, spinal or other abscesses may be freely opened, their contents removed, and a healthy granulating surface established, and the sinus often closed without incurring the ordinary risks of profuse suppuration and systemic poisoning." It is certainly comforting to be told that "Valuable as is the antiseptic method carried out in all its details, most excellent results may be obtained in treating wounds by first cleansing the surface with carbolic acid solution, and then supporting the part so that the dressings may be changed without disturbing the wound; or by leaving the wound open and applying balsam of Peru freely, while the drainage is free;" and, we may add, by securing free drainage with proper-sized tubes, and closing the rest of the wound, without the application of "balsam of Peru" or anything else.

In the chapters on bone-injuries and diseases, Pilcher's views on fractures of the lower end of the radius are given at considerable length, but no reference is made to Gordon's experiments and writings; after fracture of the patella, it is directed that "the leg should not be flexed freely under three months;" amputation is declared, as a general rule, a necessary measure in gunshot fractures of the middle or lower third of the thigh (which we are very much inclined to question when such cases occur in civil life); Lücke's bone-percussion is stated to furnish "much useful information in obscure cases."

In the paragraphs on the reparative surgery of the face, free use (with proper credit of course) is made of the writings of the late Dr. Gordon Buck, and numerous plates have been taken from the latter's work.

Here we cannot but say a word with reference to the multitude of references to authors, whose names are printed at the bottoms of the various pages. In cases like the one just referred to, such references are right and proper, but there are dozens of them that seem entirely unnecessary. Why, for example, should Le Gros Clarke's name be required to give authority to the statement that "trephining the cranium should be regarded as an operation always fraught with danger;" or Van Buren and Keyes, to that of the ordinary well-known diagnostic signs of stone in the bladder; or Leidy's or Quain's, to that of the plainest anatomical facts.

Certain of the operative procedures recommended are the more interesting to us, because they are either perhaps unlike those usually advised, or have been but recently introduced to professional notice. In wounds of the great vessels of the neck, it is directed to ligate at the seat of injury whenever practicable, no matter what the vessel may be; and to tie the external rather than the common carotid, when that trunk or one of its main branches has been opened, a rule that, in our opinion, cannot be too strongly insisted upon; in wounds of the palmar arch, pressure failing, the bleeding point is to be sought for, and ligatures applied above and below. In cases of hypertrophy of the tonsil, "removal is required only in extreme cases." In gunshot and other wounds of the abdomen, a very favourable opinion is expressed of "opening the peritoneal cavity and washing or draining off the septic fluids that would otherwise poison the blood." The "improved gum catheter" is advised to be used rather than the metallic one, in drawing off the urine, acting, as it does, "more safely, speedily, and conveniently." Bigelow's litholapaxy is described, with the statement, however, that "it will therefore be prudent to discriminate in deciding to adopt this method." Periosteal flaps in amputations are

highly favored, it being stated that "the objections to the periosteal covering of the bone, that osteophytes are liable to form on the extremity and render the stump tender, are trivial when compared with the advantages which follow the protection which is afforded from necrosis and osteomyelitis, and the basis which it forms for a movable covering." Chopart's amputation is regarded with little favour; and knee-joint disarticulation is much preferred to any of the condyloid or supra-condyloid amputations, of which it is said: "The practice of dividing the condyles cannot be sustained by any rational hypothesis, nor practised on any scientific principles."

Among the, as it seems to us, more questionable procedures recommended, are that of uranoplasty when the child has reached the age of two years; and aspiration of the liver "in all cases of hypochondria and melancholia," in order that a possibly existing abscess may be discovered and emptied. Aspiration is not, as stated, a "harmless operation," and we are surprised that so excellent and cautious a surgeon as the author should have permitted himself to unqualifiedly sanction a procedure which has not been fairly tested, and has in its history but little to recommend it. To the expressed concurrence with the views of Otis, on the relation existing between the circumference of the penis and the capacity of the urethral canal, and on deep spasmodic stricture, many will take exception; as also to the declared opinion that "venereal and syphilitic stricture of the rectum results from the healing of chancroidal ulcers, . . . antisiphilitic remedies being valueless."

In treating of hernia, operations for the radical cure (of which only Wood's is described, with an "it has been reported" reference to Heaton's method) are said "not to have accomplished the objects sought with that degree of certainty which belongs to legitimate operations;" the direct inguinal variety is declared to push before it or lacerate the conjoined tendon, no mention being made of its escaping outside the margin of that tendon.

Certain things have been omitted which might well have been mentioned, *e. g.*, the use of plaster of Paris in treatment of ruptured tendo Achillis; Morton's treatment of spina bifida; Rouge's operation for gaining access to the nasal fossa; Jenks's operation for lacerated perineum. Neither lip-cancer nor the operation for its removal is referred to, though mention is made of the disease as located on the nose, tonsil, colon, penis, rectum, testicle, tongue, uterus, labia, and breast.

A few verbal inaccuracies have been noticed, *e. g.*, quadriceps extensor *cubiti*, instead of *cruris*; *genio-hyo-glossus*, instead of *hyo-glossus* muscle (as overlying the lingual artery); the external saphenous nerve a branch of the *lumbar* instead of *sacral* plexus; the inner branch of the ilio-femoral ligament running to the trochanter minor, instead of to the prominence on the ridge a half inch or so outside. In treating of venesection, it is directed to stop "when the proper amount of blood is drawn, as proved by the fainting of the patient." Are we to infer that bleeding is always to be carried *ad deliquium*?

The "Manual" is a welcome addition to the works on operative surgery, which cannot but be duly appreciated by both students and practitioners. Our only regret is that its author did not, confining it more closely to operative procedures, give a greater number of them as recommended in the treatment of various diseases and injuries; and then let us have his individual opinion upon their respective values. Such opinion

would have carried much weight, coming as it would from one long known as a learned and able surgeon of no limited experience through many years. More of Stephen Smith and less of the thousand and one names referred to would have proportionately increased the value of the work.

P. S. C.

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ART. XXIII.—*A System of Medicine*. Edited by J. RUSSELL REYNOLDS, M.D., F.R.S., Professor of the Principles and Practice of Medicine in University College, London, etc. etc. *With numerous additional illustrations*. By HENRY HARTSHORNE, A.M., M.D., lately Professor of Hygiene in University of Penna., etc. In three volumes. Vol. I. General Diseases and Diseases of the Nervous System. Royal 8vo. pp. 1127. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea, 1879.

THERE is no medical work which we have in times past more frequently and freely consulted when perplexed by doubts as to treatment, or by having unusual or apparently inexplicable symptoms presented to us, than "Reynolds's System of Medicine;" and even now that we possess more recent works of a similar character we often turn to it in preference, with a feeling of certainty that light will be thrown upon questions which seem obscure to us. Among its contributors are gentlemen who are as well known by reputation upon this side of the Atlantic as in Great Britain, and whose right to speak with authority upon the subjects about which they have written, is recognized the world over. They have evidently striven to make their essays as practical as possible, and while these are sufficiently full to entitle them to the name of monographs, they are not loaded down with such an amount of detail as to render them wearisome to the general reader. In a word, they contain just that kind of information which the busy practitioner frequently finds himself in need of. It has therefore been a matter of surprise to us that the work has not hitherto been republished in this country.

Many years have elapsed since the appearance of the first edition of this work, and of the second edition the first volume is all, we believe, that has thus far been issued. During the interval many and important additions have been made to our knowledge of disease. In the single department of diseases of the nervous system the gain has been immense. It is certainly not more than ten years since the labours of Charcot, Vulpian, Erb, Althaus, and others—or since the publication of the part of the work which treats of these diseases—have enabled us to distinguish multiple sclerosis of the spinal cord from paralysis agitans, and have made us familiar with the clinical characters of polio-myelitis and sclerosis of the lateral columns of the cord. In order that these deficiencies may be supplied the publisher has committed the preparation of the work for the press to Dr. Henry Hartshorne, whose judicious notes distributed throughout the volume afford abundant evidence of the thoroughness of the revision to which he has subjected it. He has also added several new articles, the most important of which are on scrofula, multiple sclerosis, and sclerosis of the lateral columns of the cord; hystero-epilepsy, pseudo-hypertrophy, muscular paralysis, and chlorosis. The de-